

*Persecution Display'd :*

I N A  
**S E R M O N**

Preach'd at

**C O L C H E S T E R**

T O A

**C O N G R E G A T I O N**

O F

**Protestant Dissenters:**

On November 5. 1732.

By **JOHN TREN.**

With Some ADDITIONS.

**L O N D O N :**

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## LUKE IX. 55.

*But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.*

**T**HESE Words are Part of a Story, which we have recorded by no Evangelist but St. *Luke*. The Account begins at the 51<sup>st</sup> Verse, where we find our Saviour, on the Foresight of the Time of his Passion near approaching, notwithstanding the gloomy Prospect of his Agonies, and cruel Death, and maugre all the Persuasions and Intreaties of his Friends, resolutely bent on going up to *Jerusalem*, which was to be the Scene of that bloody Action. And for as much as being now in *Galilee*, he must needs pass through the Country of *Samaria*; and because he had a large Company with him, he sent two of his Disciples beforehand (*James* and *John* in all likelihood) to procure a Lodging, and provide for him and his Attendants. But the *Samaritans* who bare an inveterate Grudge against the *Jews*, on Account of

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their



their different Place, and manner of Worship, finding that they were designed for the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and looking upon it, as a notorious Slight put upon their Temple and Worship on Mount *Gerizim*, refused him Admission. Hereupon the two Messengers, being provoked with their Rudeness, and Incivility towards their Master, apply to Christ for Leave to command down Fire from Heaven, to burn up them, and their Village, in like manner as *Elias* had done to consume the two Captains, and their Fifties, who were sent to apprehend him. Here was a specious Pretence alledged: If *Elias* through his Zeal for the Honour of God, and the Legal Dispensation, had such a Commission given him, why would not the Honour of Christ, and the Gospel Revelation be vindicated in the same terrible, and miraculous Way? *But our Saviour turned and rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of.*

We cannot here but by the Way observe the mild, and gentle Method, the Blessed Jesus took to rebuke them. He doth not fly out into exorbitant Passion, nor use any wrathful Language: At the same time that he blames them for their fiery Spirit, he gives them a Pattern of what Spirit they should be, by the Frame of his own. He looked about upon them, and reprov'd them with this calm Reply only, *Ye know*  
*not*



*not what manner of Spirit ye are of; q. d.* Ye do not consider, how unbecoming you, and and your Profession, the Disposition you have now expressed is; you may think you have been acted herein by a Zeal for the Honour of God, and of me the Son of God, your Lord and Master: But alas! you are mistaken; Passion hath too much overcome and blinded you; and the Motives that induced you hereunto, though you may not at present be sensible of it, are merely carnal.

The Wisdom of our Legislature having seen fit to set apart this Day, in order to commemorate our twice happy Deliverance from the ill Effects of a popish, persecuting Spirit; an Article of which Religion it is, to destroy and extirpate, in the most bloody Manner, all those who are of different Sentiments, in Matters pertaining to the Worship of God; I thought I could not better answer the End and Design of keeping this Day, than by setting before you the Sin and Guilt of Persecution, and letting you see how diametrically opposite it is to the true Temper and Genius of Christianity; which the Words I have read unto you, will give me an Opportunity of doing.

The Proposition I shall advance as the Subject of my Discourse from them, is,

A Spirit of Persecution is directly contrary to the true Spirit and Genius of Christianity.

In

In considering this Proposition my Method shall be,

I. To point out to you the Persons, that may be truly said to be persecuted, or to suffer by this Unchristian Spirit of Persecution.

II. The Ways and Methods, by which the Spirit of Persecution may be shewn.

III. The Springs from which it usually riseth.

IV. I shall endeavour to shew the utter Inconsistency of it with, and its direct Contrariety to, the true Spirit and Genius of Christianity.

I. I shall point out unto you the Persons, that may be truly said to be persecuted, or to suffer by this Unchristian Spirit of Persecution. And this I the rather choose to do, because it is more than probable a great many honest and well-designing Christians, at the same time that they do utterly abhor the Sin, yet inadvertently, and thro' Ignorance do contract the Guilt of Persecution; they imagine that such and such Persons, against whom they express their angry Resentments, are Objects worthy of it; that it is their Duty, what God himself requires them to do; whereas it is indeed

deed, and in truth, the very Spirit of Persecution they are acted by. Whilst they think they are doing God good Service, they are real Persecutors. Persecution is properly the molesting, or punishing any Person merely for his different Sentiments in Matters of Religion; and he that molests and punisheth any one merely for his having other guesses Notions of Religion, than he himself hath, is led by a persecuting Spirit; I say, *merely* for his different Sentiments in religious Matters, because where a Person, under Pretence of acting according to his religious Principles endeavours to subvert the Foundations of a Society, or create Disturbances in a State, though he be punished, yet he is not persecuted, but justly suffers as an Evil Doer. But where a Person, in all his external Conduct; behaves every way agreeably to the Laws of God and the Land; lives peccably and honestly with all those he hath his Conversation amongst; and gives unto all their just Rights and Dues; whatever Injuries he sustains on account of his not being in the same way of thinking as to religious Affairs with others, they all flow from a Spirit of Persecution. Then consequently,

1.) Infidels and Unbelievers; Those who deny the Scripture Revelation, who believe not a Word of the *Bible*; but look upon Christ as an Impostor, and the Gospel



spel to be only a Cheat : Even those, I say, may be truly said to be persecuted. Whatever they suffer from Christians *purely* for their denying, or refusing to receive the Christian Revelation, is Persecution. And those who inflict any Punishment upon them *only* for this, are downright Persecutors, whatever they may think of themselves.

This, I do not at all question, will appear at first Sight somewhat strange. What ! may some say, shall any dare to undermine the Foundations of Christianity with Impunity ? Shall they be suffered to raise Objections against the Truth of our most holy Religion without Restraint ? to deny the divine Authority of the Gospel Revelation ; to asperse the Person ; to vilify the Miracles of the Blessed Jesus ? Shall Christian Magistrates and Ministers endure this, and not use their Authority to stop their Mouths, and curb their Hands ? What then will become of those divine Oracles, which we profess so heartily to believe, and which we place all our Hopes of Happiness, and Salvation on the Truth of.

God forbid, that ever Christianity should stand on so slender a Foundation, as to need any external Force and Violence to prop it up. It came into the World at first supported by its own native Simplicity, Purity and Truth. It hath made its Way through the World hitherto, not with  
carnal

carnal Weapons, but by the Force and Power of Conviction. And it will stand for ever firm on the same Basis, without any foreign Aid and Assistance as long as there are Men of honest and sincere Minds willing to know and understand, and ready to embrace and obey the Truth. Let Magistrates confine themselves to the proper Affairs of their Province, and be careful to maintain private Property and publick Peace. Let Ministers attend to the Duties of their Function and endeavour by all the Force and Power of Perswasion and Argument, to recommend the Gospel to the Consciences of Men. But let neither the One nor the Other be so very officious in serving the Interest of Christ, and his Religion, as to use any Methods of Compulsion and Violence, to make Men profess Christianity, whether they will or no. And it were to be wished for the Honour of our most holy Religion, that every Infidel and Unbeliever was allowed freely to urge and publish whatever they had to object against the Truth of it, provided they did it in a decent Manner, and as became sincere Enquirers after Truth. Christianity is so far from having suffered any Damage hitherto by all the Attacks that have been made against it, that it shines forth with greater Lustre, and more conspicuous Glory.

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God hath given every Man a Power and invested him with a Right to judge for himself, independent of all Mankind. Without this Liberty of private Judgment, there can be no Religion acceptable to or profitable to a Man's self. It is not the professing to believe this, or that, or the other particular Set of Notions, that deserves the Name of Religion. The Man himself must in the proper Use of his Rational Faculties see the Articles of his Faith to be founded on the Nature of Things or the revealed Word of God, or all his Profession of Religion will signify nothing. His Conduct otherwise will be unbecoming his reasonable Nature. And whether or no he employs his natural Powers to the purposes God designed them he is accountable to God only. *To his own Master he standeth or falleth.*(a) For any Man or Body of Men to endeavour to abridge him of the Use of his natural Power, or do him any Injury in the Exercise of his natural Right, where the Civil Constitution or State receives no Hurt or Damage by it, is Injustice, is Opposition, is Persecution.

This is sufficiently warranted by our Saviour's Conduct towards those, who were here so rude to him, as the least Consideration will evidence. Who were these so uncivil People, as not to receive Christ himself

(a) Rom. XIV. 4.



self on his Journey designing to come among them? They were *Samaritans*. Who were they? They were *Heathens* brought from *Assyria*, and placed in the Cities of *Samaria* in the Room of the Children of *Israel*, who were carried into Captivity. They were Idolaters, who *made Gods of their own, and put them in the Houses of the High Places.* (b) They not only disbelieved, and denied the Truth and Divinity of the *Old Testament* Revelation, but refused to admit Christ Jesus in Person sending unto them. These therefore did the two Apostles deem worthy of Destruction by the miraculous Hand of God. And the Lord Jesus needed have done no more than speak the Word, and they would have been consumed from off the Earth. But in answer to their Request for punishing them by Fire from Heaven he only said, the Spirit you shew towards such Unbelievers and vile Idolaters, misbecomes you. And throughout the whole Course of his Life he never once exerted his Power to the Detriment of any, because they would not believe in him; which had Infidelity been a just Reason for punishing any he would not have failed to do. The Apostles after his Ascension, followed his Example; *the Weapons of whose Warfare, St. Paul tells us, were not carnal, but spiritual,*

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tual,

(b) 2 Kings XVII. 24. 29.

*tual, mighty through God, to the pulling down Strong-holds, casting down Imaginations, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ.*(c) And whence any Christian Magistrate or Minister, derives his Authority to exert any worldly Power he is possessed of, to the Damage of those, who do not, nor will believe the Gospel, will be a very difficult Matter to shew.

2.) Those who unnecessarily divide themselves, or who keep up an unnecessary Division, from any established Christian Church, cannot on that account receive any injurious Treatment, from those in Power, unless they are acted by a persecuting Spirit.

Let the Causes of the first Division be ever so weak and trifling, and let the Division be maintained and fomented, with ever so much Prejudice and Bigotry ; so as that the strongest Reasons and Arguments can make no Impression upon, nor will not so much as be attended to by them, yet still no Establishment can inflict any Punishment on them only for this their Separation without being guilty of the Sin of Persecution. I will readily allow, that every causeless Division from an established Christian Church, is Schism, and that such as run into it, are guilty of a very great and heinous Sin, and may be justly termed Schismatics, But what then? because they sinfully separate and become

(c) 2 Cor. x. 4.

come Schismatics, must the others fly to sinful Means to reclaim them, and turn Persecutors? No: Let such as are in Establishments display in ever so lively a Manner, the Sin, and paint out the Guilt of Schism in ever so hideous a Light, yet it will not give any the least Countenance to their violent and rigorous Proceedings in endeavouring to bring them back into the Bosom of the Church; they may as soon wash a Negro White, as by all their Art and Skill to wipe themselves clean from the Sin and Guilt of Persecution.

This was the very Case before us. The Jewish Religion was of divine Establishment. The Place of Worship and the Way, and Manner of their religious Service was appointed, and settled by God himself, as to every particular Circumstance of it. On which account it far surpass'd any religious Establishment, that has been since in the World. In Opposition to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, the *Samaritans* had built a Temple for themselves on Mount *Gerizim*. They had established a divine Service of their own inventing. And so bigotted were they to their own Will-worship, that they could not bear to see any to go up to the Temple of *Jerusalem* to worship according to God's own Appointment. Here was Schism with a witness, and if ever any were, they must be Schismatics. Had this therefore been a  
sufficient



sufficient Reason for the *Jews* punishing of them, our Blessed Lord would not have check'd the Zeal of the two Apostles, as unbecoming them.

3.) Those who hold the main Substance of Religion with ourselves, though they may differ in their Sentiments from us, as to some few particular Points, cannot receive any injurious Usage at our Hands, unless we are acted by a persecuting Spirit. This Head will be readily acknowledged to follow from the foregoing. For if we should justly be deemed Persecutors, if we used any ill for not believing in the Name of Christ, and the divine Authority of the Gospel Revelation; or for a needless, unjust Separation from us, as to the Place and Manner of religious Worship, much more surely should we incur the Guilt of Persecution, by our harsh and rigorous Behaviour towards those who profess to be of *the same Body*, and guided by the *same Spirit*, to have the *same Lord*, the *same Faith*, as to the Essentials, *the same Baptism*, as to the Substance, *the same God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all*, (d) though they do not, and cannot fall into the same Way of thinking with ourselves.

Considering

(d) Eph. iv. 4. 5.

Considering indeed Christians, the different natural Constitutions of Body, and Tempers of Mind, the different Methods of Education, the different Conversations they are entertained with, the different Views and Interests they have in the World, it is next to one, if it be not an absolute Impossibility for all Men to be of the same Mind and Judgment in all Religious Matters. God no where commands us to be so, only with respect to the main Principles of Religion. Neither should we be fond of Multiplying to ourselves Fundamentals, whereby the Bounds of Charity may be narrowed, but be glad to see the Gate of Heaven, and the Gate of the Church as wide as possible. Where we see a truly Christian Life and Conversation, we ought to judge the Heart in Charity to be right and sincere towards God; and though we may not avoid being able to judge them mistaken as to some Doctrines, we ought charitably to hope their Error will not be imputed to them; always remembering that *we ourselves at present see but through a Glass darkly.* (e) That it is more than possible our own Judgments may be misinformed, and those that differ from us may be in the right, whilst we are in the wrong, and shall therefore stand in as much need  
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(e) 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

of Charity and Mercy at their Hands, as we now imagine them to do. Whenever we arrive at Heaven, we shall all, to be sure, have Reason to blush at the Imperfection of our present Knowledge, and the Multitude of our Mistakes. Whilst we are in the Way therefore we should be indured and ready to bear with one another's Infirmities, to pity one another's Weaknesses, and encourage one another in walking up the steep Ascent to Glory and Happiness.

II. The Second Thing in my proposed Method was to consider the Ways and Methods, by which the Spirit of Persecution may be shewn. I do not design to descend to minute Particulars, but shall only hint unto you in the general these two ; *viz.* by Words, and by Actions.

1.) One Way of expressing a Spirit of Persecution is by Words. When we unjustly censure, and unmercifully condemn, when we slander, revile and backbite, and give Names of Infamy and Reproach to any, for differing in their Opinions, as to Religious Matters, from us, it all proceeds from a persecuting Spirit. And really when we consider the dangerous, and very often fatal Effects of an ungovern'd Tongue, we cannot easily tell which is the worst Species of Persecution, whether of Words or Actions:  
 Though



Tho' in the Eyes and Judgment of the World, hard Names and ill Language may seem but indifferent Things; and to some perhaps a laudable Way of contending earnestly for the Faith; to be sure a great many Christians, who would, 'tis likely, scruple the severe Methods of spoiling the Goods, the confiscating the Estates, imprisoning the Persons, burning the Bodies to save the Souls of reputed Hereticks, make no great Conscience of undermining their Characters, of destroying their Credit, taking away their Usefulness in Life, and with that of Consequence often the Prospect of a Livelihood for themselves and Families, affixing Terms of Distinction to them of harsh Sound, and which convey frightful Ideas to the Populace. Which Way of Proceeding, what is it; but like dressing them up in a Bear-skin in order to be baited by the Mob? I speak not of any particular Sect or Party. The Spirit of Persecution in this Manner prevails, and is too visible among all Parties. Why else do we hear the Terms, *Deist, Socinian, Arrian, Arminian, Calvinist, Antinomian*, and such like, so often handed about in Conversation, and applied to particular Persons. What End can Men have in so doing, but to point out such and such Persons to the World as dangerous, and infectious, who ought to be avoided as carefully as those who have got the Plague?

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What other Design can they have than to raise the Prejudices and Clamours of others against them, whereby they suffer a great many Indignities, and Inconveniencies in Life? The natural Fruits of a persecuting Spirit!

2.) Another Way of expressing a Spirit of Persecution is by Actions; which are seldom wanting, where there is a Power. As soon as ever the Civil Magistrate is wrought upon to interest himself with his Authority, the Sword of Justice is unsheathed, and then we commonly hear of Fines and Imprisonments, of corporal Punishments and Banishments, of Fire and Faggot, and other Instruments of Cruelty and Death, which one would think it was hardly in Humane Nature to invent, much less to make use of.

This Kind of Persecution every where abounds in *Roman* Catholic Countries; what Numbers may we justly imagine are now groaning in the Jails, and left almost to famish in the Dungeons of some or other of their hellish Inquisitions? How many Thousands in the *Roman* Empire are at this Day by their popish persecuting Archbishop and Sovereign, turned out of their Houses and Habitations, for their Religion, driven from their Native Land, sent abroad to wander in the wide World, where they must inevitably perish, with their Wives and Families,  
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did they not find Mercy and Relief, at their Protestant Brethrens Hands? I do not love to rake up Stories of our own Land and Nation in this Respect. I could almost wish that they were all buried in eternal Oblivion; were it not that the Remembrance of them may serve to impress the Mind with a deeper Sense of the Sin and Guilt of Persecution. There are to be sure many now living, who may, and perhaps some of you can call to mind the Time, when your Teachers were sent into Corners, and you were forced to seek the Food of your Souls at the Peril of your Lives; when your Possessions and Persons lay exposed to every vile Informer, officious Constable and Time-serving Justice of Peace, who all combined agreeably to the Temper of the then Court to deprive you of the Liberty of worshipping God according to the Dictates of your Consciences, by all the Methods of Severity they could think of. Most of us can remember how the same Spirit took a more effectual Course to crush our Cause of Liberty, by enacting a Law to deprive us of what all the Laws of God and Nature gave us a Right to, I mean the Education of our own Children in the Way and Manner we thought most proper and convenient. But Thanks be to the Divine Providence, which appear'd so remarkably for us, in bringing over the present Family of *Hanover* among us. Blessed be God we

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have



have a King now on the *British* Throne, who understands our Civil and Religious Rights and Liberties too well, to suffer any one Part of his Subjects to worry and devour one another on Account of any Religious Differences. Under his Government we have nothing to fear from a persecuting Spirit; Nothing have we to desire in order to render our Happiness compleat, but what would equally tend to the Honour of His Majesty, the Credit of our common Religion, and the Good and Welfare of the Kingdom; *viz.* the Repealing the *Corporation* and *Test Acts*.

These are a Yoke that hath long lain on our Necks, which the Spirit of Persecution first fram'd for, and imposed on us; which we should long e'er now, we are assured, have got rid of, had not the same Spirit too much prevailed, in the Times following. We have hitherto born it, on the Account of our Religion, and for Conscience Sake; though at the same Time we could not but think ourselves greatly aggriev'd, as being unjustly deprived of the natural Rights of all free-born ENGLISH SUBJECTS. We have earnestly long'd for the Removal of it, not only for our own Sakes, but for the Sake of our most holy Religion, which hath long groaned to see one of her most sacred Ordinances so shamefully prostituted, and vilely abused. We have desir'd it for our King and our Country's Sake, which hath hereby lost the

the Service of a great many, as able as honest and faithful Persons, as any in the Land. And, though the Yoke should still be continued, we hope we should never so far forget our Duty to God, our King, and our Country, as to behave unbecoming English, Protestant Christian Subjects; yet we cannot but say, it is with the utmost Desire we look for the Redress of this Grievance; which we have Reason to think his Majesty's innate Goodness, and the Wisdom of our Legislators, will find an Opportunity for, as soon as possible.

III. The third Thing to be considered, was, the Springs, from whence this Spirit of Persecution usually flow.

i.) One grand Source of it is Pride. We are swollen and puffed up with an over fond Conceit of our Parts and Abilities, and think we have dived so far into the Bottom of Things, that it must be wilfull Blindness and Obstinacy in others which prevents their concurring with us in our Sentiments, and therefore cannot bear any Contradiction to what we believe to be true from them; but think them punishable for differing from us. It is true, we shall all readily acknowledge ourselves to be Fallible Creatures, and liable to Mistakes. We shall argue with all our Might against the Infallibility of the Pope, as supreme Head of the Church; and if any offer to impose their Opinion upon us, we shall

shall either pity their Weakness, or wonder at their Assurance. But the Misfortune is, though we own our natural Fallibility, we can hardly be prevailed upon to own we are ever in an Error. No; the Thing is so plain and clear to our Minds, from the Nature of the Thing, or the revealed Word of God, that we cannot be deceived in it; and a Person must resolve to shut his Eyes against the Light, or it would appear as obvious to him, as it doth to us. It is fitting therefore he should submit to our enlightened understanding, and conform to our unerring Judgment. Hence often is derived a persecuting Spirit, and Pride is at the Bottom of all.

2.) As Pride, so is Envy also the Fountain, from whence many times the Spirit of Persecution flows.

It is with a Sort of inward Pain, that we behold ourselves out-shone by others in the Profession we make. We are apt to look upon a Person of superior Reputation in the World, so far our Enemy, as he hinders us from being taken Notice of by Others in the Way and Manner and Degree, we would, and think we deserve. This moves us of Consequence to endeavour to bring him down on a Level with ourselves, or, which is still more pleasing, and desirable, to depress him to a Rank beneath us. To this End his private, and publick Character and Conduct must be ransack'd; and  
if



if any thing therein can be found to his Disadvantage, away it runs like Lightning. It is whisper'd presently about in every Hole and Corner, and most frequently some Additions made to it, to aggravate and render it the most odious. Hereby his moral Character suffers, or he is stigmatized with some odious Name or other; and all to depreciate him in the Esteem of the Common People. But if this will not do, the Civil Power must be interested in our Behalf, and he must be taken out of the Way, come what will.

I think we cannot better illustrate this Point, than by examining the Behaviour of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* towards our Blessed Lord. Before our Saviour's Appearance in Publick they were generally receiv'd as the Interpreters of the Law, and their Traditions and Decisions were entertain'd as so many Oracles. When Christ Jesus enter'd on his Ministry, he began to shew the false Glosses they had impos'd, and to set the true Meaning of the Law before the People in a proper Light, and with due Fervency and Earnestness; to expose their Hypocrisy and Wordlimindedness; and to recommend his own Doctrine by the Exemplariness of his Life and the Efficacy of his Miracles. What was the Consequence? The *Scribes* and *Pharisees* put their Heads together, and consulted how they might ruin him in the Oppinion of the Vulgar. They accordingly represent him as

*a Glutton, as a Winebibber, a Friend to Publicans and Sinners, and in Confederacy with the Devil.*

(f) This would not do. The People still followed him. At length they got him betrayed by Treachery unto their Hands, accus'd him before *Pilate* their Governor as an Enemy to *Cæsar*, and procur'd his Condemnation. *Pilate* saw through all this management, and would feign have releas'd him, on this Account we are told, *because he knew that for Envy they had deliver'd him.* (g)

3.) Another moving Spring of a persecuting Spirit, is the Desire of Revenge.

We imagine, or it may be really we have received, some Injury or Affront from a Man, or Body of Men, whether it be that they have dared to declare their Sentiments in a different Way and Manner from ours, or have spoken too flightingly of our Opinions; which we take to be a great Reflection on our Judgments; or whether they have acted a Part in civil Life, which may have displeased and provoked us, we think it beneath us to put up the Affront, and rather than go unrevenge'd all the Engines of Persecution that lie in our Power, shall be set on work against them.

It is not improbable that this was the Foundation of the present pretended Zeal of the two Apostles for the Honour of their Master. They had been sent before to prepare

pare for our Lord's Coming. Their Message was fruitless. The *Samaritans*, likely enough refused them in a reflecting, scurrilous Manner; not without reproaching them for going to worship elsewhere. This immediately fired their Spirits with Designs of Revenge. No sooner were they returned to their Master, but under the Colour of consulting his Interest, they beg Leave to destroy them all.

4. Worldly Interest is another great Source of a persecuting Spirit. Men find their Accounts, as to this World, in persecuting others, and that often prompts them to do it. Their opening their Mouths wide against Infidels, Schismatics, and Heretics, they think will raise their Reputation for Orthodoxy, make their own Party look upon them as very zealous for the Honour of Christ, and the Interest of his Religion. This will in all Probability procure them Esteem and Respect, increase their worldly Business, and bring them in Profit and Gain. Fines and Confiscations have been found also to be pretty easy Methods of raising Money, and enriching themselves. Thus have Men often made Religion subserve their temporal Interests, and under the Cloak of Zeal for Christ and his Gospel, their whole Study and Aims, and Endeavours have been to aggrandize themselves.

These are the principal Sources of all Persecution. Men may pretend what they  
D will,



will, and deceive themselves with thinking that they have only at Heart the Honour and Glory of God, and the Interest of Christ and Religion in their acting thus; and I would charitably hope, that many who have been guilty this Way, will not have this Sin laid to their Charge at the great Day. But Remainders of Corruption are in the Best, and they are Men of like Passions with others, and are too often blinded by them, so as not to discern their over warm and boyling Zeal to arise only from thence.

IV. The Fourth and Last Thing I proposed was, to endeavour to shew you the utter Inconsistency of the Spirit of Persecution with, and its direct Contrariety to the true Spirit and Genius of Christianity.

Christianity is the Religion of Christ Jesus, which he came into the World on Purpose to publish, and by Himself and his Apostles did make known to Mankind; the sacred Records of whose Ministrations we have in our *Bibles*. To understand therefore the true Spirit and Genius of his Religion, we must necessarily have Recourse to them. And by the Perusal of them, we shall easily find that Christ Jesus was designed a publick and universal Benefit to the whole World. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. For God*

God sent not his Son into the World, to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be saved (b). The Revelation which he made of God's Mind and Will in all Things relating to Salvation, was intended for the Use of All. Hence he styles himself *the Light of the World*, (i). And ordered his Apostles, to go into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature (k). Whilst he was in the World his Usefulness was extensive, his Charity not confined to this, or that, or the other particular party, whether Samaritans or Jews, of what Denomination soever. He went about doing Good, (l) to the Bodies and Souls of Men, as he had Opportunity. The Sacrifice he made of himself to God, was of general Service and Efficacy, so as to merit and procure a Conditional Offer of Pardon and Life to all. He gave his Flesh for the Life of the World. (m) He gave himself a Ransom for all (n). He tasted Death for every Man. (o) And is the Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World, (p). His Directions and Precepts, which he hath left for the Rule of his Disciples Conduct, are of a piece with his own Life and Death. They all breath forth and enjoin universal Benevolence, Love and Charity. I say unto you, which hear, love your Enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and

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pray

(b) John iii. 16, 17. (i) John viii. 12. (k) Mark xvi. 15.  
 (l) Acts x. 38. (m) John vi. 51. (n) 1 Tim. ii. 6. (o) Heb.  
 ii. 9. (p) 1 John ii. 2.

*pray for them which despitefully use you: as ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye also to them likewise. Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged; condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive, and ye shall be forgiven, (q). The Apostles trod in their Master's Steps, and recommended the same benign Spirit and Frame. Put off all these, Anger, Wrath, Malice: Put on as the Elect of God, holy and Beloved, Bowels of Mercy, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, and if any Man have a Quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye, (r). Do Good unto all Men as ye have Opportunity. (s) Be not overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good, (t). Him that is weak in the Faith receive you, (u). The Servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all Men, patient, in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God, peradventure, will give them Repentance, to the Acknowledgment of the Truth and that they may recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil, who are taking Captives by him at his Will. (x).*

This is apparently the Spirit and Genius of our most Holy Religion. This the Temper and Disposition Christianity requires from us. How different now from this is the Spirit of Persecution? When is there any the least

(q) Luke vi. 27, 28, 31, 36, 37.

(r) Col. iii. 8, 12, 13.

(s) Gal. vi. 10. (t) Rom. xi. 21.

(u) Rom. 14. 1.

(x) 2 Tim. ii. 25, 26



least Likeness or Resemblance? As contrary one to another are they as Light is to Darkness. How opposite hereunto is Pride, Envy, Revenge, &c. Shewing itself or railing at, calumniating, molesting, injuring, ruining those, who entertain different Sentiments in Religious Matters from ourselves? *This Wisdom surely descendeth not from Above, but is Earthly, Sensual, Devilish. The Wisdom that is from above is first pure then peaceable, Gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits.* (y)

Hence now may we learn what Judgment to form of the Church of Rome, a Church that is remarkable for, that glories in, the inventing, countenancing, encouraging, exercising all Sorts of Instruments of Cruelty, in order to extirpate and root out all those who are not of their Persuasion in Religion. Surely the Spirit they are acted by, must be an unchristian Spirit. Who can ever imagine the Meek, the Gentle, the Peaceable Jesus, that *came not to destroy Mens Lives, but to save them*; who can ever imagine him to give a Commission to his pretended Vicar at Rome, for the propagating his Religion (supposing it to be really his) proudly to usurp an Authority over Crown'd Heads, to undermine Civil Constitutions, to disturb the Peace of Communities, to imprison, to rack and torture, to cut the Throats of, to hang and burn those, whose

(y) James iii. 15. 17.

whose Consciences will not permit them to comply with his Determinations? Apostate Church! How will the Blood of Thousands of Saints and Martyrs of Jesus, with which thou hast made thyself drunk, arise up in Judgment against thee, and condemn thee at the last Day? Endless would it be to enumerate her various Cruelties, which have been practised throughout the whole World. *England* hath not been without its Share. Our native Land and Country can bear Testimony against her inhumane and barbarous Actions. How can our Prison Walls witness the deep Sighs, and dying Groans of Persons unjustly confined for their Religion there? Was the Earth to open her Mouth and speak, how could she tell us of the Streams of Blood of massacred *Protestants*, she hath been forced to receive? What a long Detail could she give us of the scorching Heats she hath endured, through the flaming Fires that have been kindled to burn the pious Martyrs? What a dark and hellish Scene of Murder designed to be perpetrated, was providentially disclosed on this Day, not an Hundred and thirty Years since? wherein King, Lords, and Commons were devoted a Sacrifice to popish Rage and Malice, and the offering them up was to be in the most secret and dreadful Manner that can be conceived. A fine Religion and Church truly! that can tolerate the Blowing up so many Hundred at once, for  
no

no other Reason, than not submitting to their unreasonable and superstitious Faith. Heaven prevented indeed the cursed Project of her Votaries at that Time. But the persecuting Spirit could not be at Rest. The fatal Troubles of the succeeding Reigns point out their Handy-work. At Length, by the just Permission of God, they got a Prince on the Throne as thorough-paced a Bigot to their Church, as their Hearts could wish. How did they then triumph? With what unrelenting Fury did they then prosecute those, who were not of their Faith and Party? Divine Providence suffered them to run their full Length; until by over-doing they did their own Work effectually. Their vehement and violent Proceeding had brought all our Liberty Civil and Religious very near to the Brink of Ruin. The Sight of this alarmed the Nation's Fears, and roused their wonted Courage. A Body soon was formed, an Head was only wanting. When God Spirited up the Prince of *Orange* to be the Instrument by which the glorious Deliverance should be brought about. Being invited, he generously came over. Being come, the *British* Spirit revived, and our Enemies Hearts failed them for Fear. True Religion brake out again like the Sun under a dark Cloud, and Popery vanished away like Smoak before the Brightness and Glory of it. The fifth of *November* was the Day on which our glorious Deliverer King *William* landed to our Rescue.



scue. WILLIAM! a Name that will be ever dear to all true *English Protestants*. The fifth of NOVEMBER! a Day that will be had in everlasting Remembrance while any Sense of Liberty Civil or Religious remains among us. As often as the Day annually occurs, how should our Hearts burn within us with Gratitude? In the first Place, to the Almighty MONARCH of the Universe, who over-rules all the Affairs of this lower World; and in the next Place, to the Memory of that great and good Man, who stuck at no Trouble nor Peril to save us. And whilst we are pleasing ourselves with the Reflection of our past Deliverance, how can we avoid looking upon a persecuting Spirit with the utmost Horror and Abhorrence? The Commemoration of this Day should bring to our Minds how grievously we once smarted under it, and the Remembrance of our past Sufferings should imbitter us the more against it. I shall conclude with these Words, Gen. xlix. 5, 6. *Instruments of Cruelty are in their Habitations. O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret, unto their Assembly mine Honour be not thou united. Cursed be their Anger for it is fierce, and their Wrath for it is cruel.*

*F I N I S.*

